

ER 9-5426

JUL 18 1957

Honorable Arthur Gardner

Dear Arthur:

Many thanks for your note of July 9 and the Time clipping. I'm keeping an eye on this.

If and when Congress adjourns, I'm hoping to have some time in Europe, combining some business with a little relaxation. I will be back around the first of September.

Please let me know when you get back to Washington.

Faithfully yours,

Allen W. Dulles

Allen W. Dulles
Director

O/DCI, [redacted] 5 Jul 57

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CUBA

Career Rebel

TIME
JULY 8/67

On direct orders from President Fulgencio Batista, his political supporters this week swarmed into Santiago de Cuba, capital of Oriente province, for a pro-government rally. The purpose of the forced show of loyalty: to puncture Oriente's swelling hero worship for Fidel Castro, the leader of more than 300 hardened insurrectionaries who have been harrying the government for seven months from the wilderness of the nearby Sierra Maestra. Santiago's reaction was a boycott; of a promised 70,000 demonstrators, the government could muster less than 5,000.

Today in Cuba no name moves men more quickly to praise—or to anger—than that of Fidel Castro. To the people of Oriente he is a romantic near legend.

To Batista he is a nagging threat to the strongman's position as boss of Cuba. Yet for all of Castro's new-won fame, he remains something of a man of mystery whose political philosophy and ultimate aims are as shadowy as his hit-and-run sorties out of the Sierra Maestra.

Second Pistol. Like most of Cuba's best-remembered revolutionaries—including President Batista—Castro was born in Oriente, in 1926. The son of a hard-living, self-made wealthy sugar planter, he spent his boyhood in Oriente, went to a Catholic high school in Havana. One day when he was 16, a priest caught him carrying a pistol, tongue-lashed him so furiously that Castro went to his room—and quietly handed over a second pistol.

Since then, Castro has not given up firearms so readily. At Havana University he plunged into the fervid politics of the student federation (F.E.U.), was arrested several times in connection with political assassinations. In 1947 he took part in a seaborne filibuster aimed at toppling the dictatorship of the Dominican Republic; and when the Cuban government halted the expedition, Castro dived into the sea to escape arrest and swam three miles to shore. In 1948 he went as a student to Bogotá during the Ninth International Conference of American States to demonstrate against "non-Latin influence in Latin America." When bloody anti-government rioting broke out, Castro rushed to a rebel-held police station to enlist in the revolution. Quickly captured by Colombian troops, Castro thought fast, got off by claiming to be a bodyguard of U.S. Delegate George C. Marshall.

Foredoomed Attack. Castro left Havana University in 1950 with degrees in law, international law and the social sciences,

set up a law practice, married the daughter of a man who later became one of Batista's top officials, fathered a son. In 1952 he ran for Congress in the elections that were canceled by Batista's coup. Outraged, Castro plotted for a year, then led a band of some 40 men in a foredoomed frontal attack against Santiago's Moncada barracks. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment (and divorced by his wife), but 19 months later Batista freed all political prisoners, including Castro.

Castro went to Mexico, where he sold his overcoat for \$20 and used the money to print a political pamphlet that contained the speech Lawyer Castro made in his own defense at the Moncada trial. The long and impassioned speech is the clearest record of his political beliefs. His Socialist-flavored main proposals:

☐ Nationalization of the U.S.-owned power and telephone companies.

☐ Confiscation of all wealth gained by governmental corruption.

☐ A drastic land reform that would break up the big U.S.-owned sugar estates and give rented and sharecropped land to tenants.

☐ A sharing of 30% of industrial profits by labor.

☐ Expansion of industrialization, public housing, rural electrification.

☐ Deliverance of Cuba from "the selfish interests of a dozen businessmen."

Seasick Invasion. In the mountains near Mexico City, Castro set up a military training camp, held meetings with sympathetic Cuban business and professional men, who apparently dismissed his land-reforming, anti-business attitudes as youthful radicalism. It was agreed that Castro would lead a military revolution, but that once Batista was ousted, the businessmen would take over, rule Cuba for two years, reorganize the government, end corruption, hold free elections. Last December Castro landed a force of 82 seasick men in Oriente. Set upon by Batista's army and air force, the rebels were scattered, and Castro was chased into the Sierra Maestra. But mountain peasants supplied him with food, and his businessmen allies began shipping him arms. Late in May he had gained strength enough to lead a successful dawn raid on a 60-man Cuban army garrison. Castro knows that he cannot win merely by staging small-scale raids and avoiding capture. But he does want to become a symbol of opposition that will attract a majority of Cubans and encourage at least part of Batista's army to defect to the rebel side.

Hon. Allen W. Dulles

Personal & Confidential